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Costa Rica Experience - Sept to Nov

Adventure



Relaxation



Culture



Trip Name: Costa Rica Experience - Sept to Nov **Trip Code:** CRXP **Duration:** From 4 weeks

Trip Highlights

- Volunteer on our epic sea turtle conservation project
- See some of the awesome things that Costa Rica has to offer!
- Go white water rafting down class 3-4 rapids
- Take a trip by kayak through the mangroves in Bocas del Toro
- Lend a hand on one of our community projects



Overview

If you're looking for an awesome four week adventure, then our action packed, epic Costa Rica Experience is what you've been looking for! Starting in the buzzin' capital of San Jose in the centre of Costa Rica, we will take all of you Real Gappers around the country of our dreams- from the gorgeous Caribbean coast, Arenal volcano and the beautiful beaches of the Guancaste region.

You'll also get the opportunity to lend a hand on one of our awesome volunteering projects, from sea turtle conservation to helping build new homes for disadvantaged locals. Once you've been volunteering, the typical Costa Rica Experience itinerary will then take you to the gorgeous Bocas del Toro islands, which are just off the coast of Panama, for a massive chill out sesh. If you take the extra adventure option, there'll be a chance for you to take up some epic adventures activities along the way!

Want to go in June or July? [Click here](#) to join our summer departures

Destination Info

It's blatantly obvious why Costa Rica is loved by travellers from all over the world. It has something for everybody, from the mind blowing beaches of the Pacific Coast, to the untouched rainforest which covers a hefty amount of the country.

With over 27% of the country being made up of protected habitats and national parks, Costa Rica is a playground for nature lovers- especially those which thrive on exploration. Your experience of Costa Rica will encompass everything from its rich colonial heritage to its colourful towns and vibrant, friendly people.

Itinerary



Day 1

One of our in-country Real Gappers will collect you from the airport and take you to your hostel accommodation in Alajuela. If your flight arrives before 6pm you're in luck- we host an awesome welcome dinner in a great local restaurant on your first night where you'll get the chance to tickle your tastebuds with your first taste of life in Costa Rica. Depending on your arrival time there may also be some free time before the meal for you to kick back and relax.

Day 2

Rise and shine! It's going to be an early start today as we begin with your orientation sesh- between 8.00am and 8:30am a Real Gapper will come to the hostel to collect you, and walk you through the town of Alajuela to the Real Gap offices, where you'll be given breakfast. The orientation session generally runs from 8.30am until approx 10.30am with a 15 minute break, so you'll get to learn loads about the area and ask any questions you may have. After the orientation you'll transfer to the location of your first volunteer placement at the Turtle Conservation Project- Junquilla! A packed lunch will be provided.

Days 3-6

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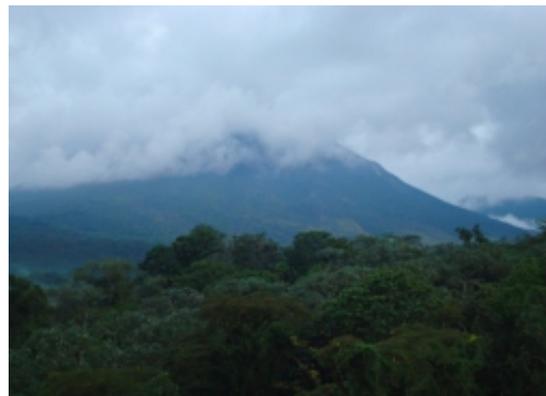
Today you'll begin an awesome volunteer placement on the beautiful Pacific Coast at the Sea Turtle Conservation Camp. You will spend five nights at the project in the volunteer house. Duties at the project are completely varied depending on what needs doing at the time, but you could be patrolling the beach, helping to clear the area, or releasing baby turtles into the sea!

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner are provided throughout your time at the Turtle Conservation Project.

Day 7

After breakfast we'll say goodbye to the project and head up to Playa Grande beach by public transport. We'll then get a boat across the river and walk up the beach to our hostel!

No meals are included.



Day 8

Surfs up, we're going to hit the beach today! We'll start off with the basics (ie- learning to stand on the board from the safety of the beach, etc... you get the drill), and then it'll be time to hit the waves with your English speaking professional surf instructor for a 2 hour long lesson! Lessons will be taken in groups according to group size.

No meals are included.

Day 9

Fancy a chill out sesh? Sunbathing? Exploring? Today's a free day so you can enjoy the beach to your heart's content, or you could venture out to the nearby Tamarindo to have a look around.

No meals are included.

Day 10

Today we'll travel by public transport up into the mountains, to the little village of Bijagua in the northern part of Costa Rica. We'll be staying in an Eco Lodge nestled in its own private rainforest!

Dinner included.

Day 11

After a hearty local breakfast, we'll venture into the forest to see the tree canopy from above! This part of the forest boasts three hanging bridges to walk across – so it's an awesome way to see all of the wildlife that Costa Rica has to offer!

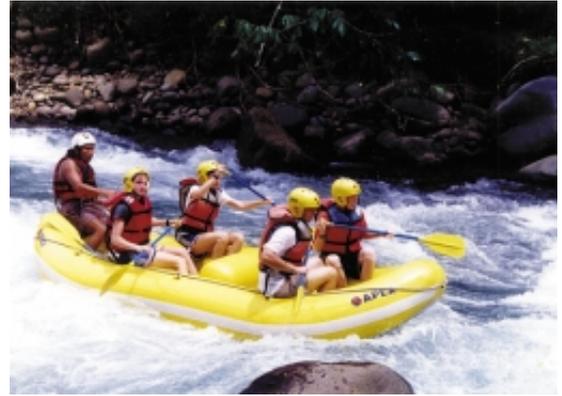
The hike will take approx two hours, and then in the afternoon you'll have time to relax to the sound of the cicadas and take in the breathtaking view from Las Heliconias, where you can see two volcanos and on a clear day you may be able to see all the way to the Nicaragua lake!

Breakfast and dinner included.

Day 12

An early start today as we'll have breakfast at the lodge, then head back into the town of Bijagua to pick up our steeds! We'll spend two hours on horseback riding through the lush jungle and through rivers until we reach Volcan Tenorio National Park. Here we dismount, and continue on foot up through the trails of the park, until we reach the majestic Rio Celeste (also known as the 'blue lagoon') with a waterfall and the viewpoint. The hike will take approximately three hours and at the end of it a traditional lunch awaits us in a local "soda" (small Costa Rican diner serving local specialities).

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included



Day 13

After breakfast we'll continue our travels by public transport to the epic Volcano Arenal – a must see on any trip to Costa Rica! The Arenal volcano is one of the most active volcanoes in the Americas. We'll stay in a family run hotel, with an amazing view of the perfect conical volcano outside! You'll have free time to explore the charming town of La Fortuna, with plenty of souvenir shops, cafès and internet cafes - or you may like to treat yourself to a massage after yesterdays hike!

Lunch and dinner not included

Day 14

We venture a bit closer to the Arenal Volcano today; we drive to the other side of the Volcano where we enter Volcan Arenal National Park. After a short hike through the dry tropical forest we reach the old lava flows from the huge eruption in 1968. Later on, we move to a safe observation to watch the volcano; if we're lucky we may feel the ground tremble and see the night sky lit up with explosions of ash and lava in a natural display of fireworks.

Then it's time to relax as we finish off the day at Baldi Hot Springs – natural thermal pools at the bottom of the smouldering volcano! There are 23 different pools of varying temperatures along with water slides, saunas, wet bars and botanical gardens all for you to explore and enjoy! If you're lucky you may be able to see the lava flowing from the continuously erupting crater in the distance.

No meals included

Day 15

Today we hot the White water – for an adrenaline pumping rafting trip!

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Our rafting guides will pick us up at the hostel, and take us to where our tour begins. After a safety briefing, we start this adrenaline packed tour down class 3 - 4 rapids. The tour takes approximately 3 hours and we will be met at the end by our transport which will take us back to San Ramon, and to our homestay accommodation ready to start work tomorrow! You will have dinner at your homestay accommodation - a chance for you to get to know your host families!

Fruit and Drinks included.

Days 16 - 20

Today we'll start work on the second volunteer project in San Ramon where you will be helping to build new homes for local people.

Your work schedule and construction site will be discussed with you once you arrive in Costa Rica; transport to and from your building site is included during your days of project work.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner provided on days 16, 17, 18 and 19, a packed lunch will be provided for you to take to the building site with you.

On day 20 we will be spending the day on a zip wire tour through the forests, which is approx an hour from San Ramon in the mountains. In total there are nine platform cables, a tarzan swing and three extra long cables- and it's all so much fun!



Day 21

We say goodbye to San Ramon today, and head back into the buzzin' capital city of Costa Rica, San Jose. Our accommodation is in a lively Hostel located in Barrio Amon in the centre of the city. We will take a walking tour around the capital, taking in the sights such as the National Theatre, Plaza de Cultura, the central market and the artisan fair.

Breakfast included

Day 22

We travel towards the Caribbean by public transport which will take us down the Caribbean coast to Puerto Viejo. Here we will stay in a beach house and the rest of the day will be free time for you to sit back and relax!

No meals are included.

Day 23

Today we'll say goodbye to Costa Rica for a few days, as we'll be off to explore Panama!

We take the two hour journey down to the border with Panama by public transport. After completing all the necessary immigration requirements, we are in a new country! (Immigration costs are not included)

Once in Panama we travel by minibus down to the docks where we hop on the water taxi over to the beautiful islands of Bocas del Toro. From the border crossing, the journey is approximately 1.5 hours.

Our accommodation will be in a quiet hostel with an amazing decking area over the ocean, which is located on the main island of Isla Colon.

No meals included.

Day 24

It's a full day today as we head out on the boat! First stop is dolphin bay, where you'll hopefully get the chance to see these awesome mammals jump up by the boat. Next we'll head off to Coral Cay to snorkel around the beautiful reef – if you're lucky you may see moray eels, lobsters, rays and possibly a turtle or two!

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After snorkelling the tour stops for a lunch break (lunch not included) before continuing onto Bastimentos island, and the private Red Frog Beach.

Our last stop is another snorkel experience on a high drop off with a possibility that you may see sea horses, barracudas, crabs, and maybe even a nurse shark!

The tour will last for approximately 6 hours.

No meals included



Day 25

Today we will jump onto our kayaks, and head out on an adventure through the mangroves. The trip will last approx 4 hours, and be split into two groups depending on the number of people on your Costa Rica Experience!

No meals included.

Day 26

We'll be taking a trip today to Starfish beach, locally known as Playa Estrella, which gets its name from the thousands of starfish that live in the area. Once we arrive you'll have free time for the rest of the day to relax on the beach. If the weather isn't great we will visit the small town of Bocas del Drago – where Christopher Columbus first stepped onto these islands!

No meals included

Day 27

It's our last day in Panama!

Today we head off to the remote Zapatillas Islands, a pristine marine national park which is approximately a 2 hour boat ride from Bocas del Toro. Here you'll have the chance to be Robinson Crusoe, as you spend the day on these twin uninhabited islands.

No meals included

Day 28

Today we take the water taxi back across to the mainland, followed by a minibus to the town of Changuinola where we take the direct bus back into Costa Rica and onto San Jose. We still have to pass through immigration, so remember to keep those passports handy!

We should arrive back in San Jose in the afternoon where we will hop on another bus back to the hostel in Alajuela, where we started this fantastic adventure all that time ago.

A farewell dinner will be arranged for the evening where you can share your stories with your fellow travelling companions.

Dinner included

Day 29

After what we trust has been a thoroughly enjoyable adventure it is time to bid farewell to Costa Rica and Panama. No activities are arranged for today but a transfer back to San Jose International Airport will be arranged for you, depending on the time of your flight.

Please note: Itineraries and activities are subject to change

Accommodation

The types of accommodation will vary throughout the programme from hostels to beach cabins to a lodge in rainforest!

Programme Services and Facilities

Internet

There is Internet access at the backpackers hostel, and also at the Real Gap office in Alajuela, which is available to all customers during orientation. You will also find Internet cafés around the country, which usually charge around \$1.50 - \$3 per hour.

Telephone

There are plenty of public telephones in Alajuela and all over Costa Rica. These will usually operate with phone cards, which you can purchase from small shops and kiosks. Please check that the phone card you buy is suitable for international calls.

Your mobile phone may or may not work in Costa Rica, depending on your network, and if it does, please be aware that in many areas you may not always get a signal. It is not possible to buy a SIM card in Costa Rica unless you are a landline owner, which can take up to four months to achieve, so please bear this in mind when deciding whether or not to take your mobile phone.

The international dialling code for Costa Rica is +506. To place an outgoing direct dialled international call, dial +44 for the UK followed by the telephone number. For example to call Real Gap Experience dial +44 1892 516164.

Laundry

Laundry facilities will depend on your location; it is advisable to take some travel wash with you just in case.

Meals

Some meals are included in your programme, these are noted on your programme itinerary. On the days where meals are not included this is a fantastic opportunity to sample some of the traditional local dishes that Costa Rica and Panama has to offer; food is extremely cheap to buy in both countries.

What's Included

- Airport transfer
- All accommodation
- Meals according to itinerary
- Welcome and farewell dinner
- All tours and activities as per itinerary
- 24-hour emergency help



What's Not Included

- Flights
- Travel insurance
- Some meals
- Alcoholic beverages
- Personal expenditure



Is This Trip For You?

Volunteer Requirements

- No Spanish is required to take part in this programme, however a basic knowledge will be beneficial to you and the local people that you will be working with.
- Volunteers should be physically fit and be able to swim with confidence.
- Flexibility, enthusiasm and a willingness to work is always welcome!

Additional Information

Your Volunteer Placements

The Costa Rica Experience gives you the chance to take part in a four-week adventure in this amazing country. The programme includes a two short volunteer project placements and a number of excursions.

Sea Turtle Conservation at Playa Buenavista.

Play a part in the effort to preserve one of the planets oldest species on this isolated beach on the Nicoya

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peninsular, on the pacific coast of Costa Rica. Volunteers are desperately needed to help patrol the beach at night time looking for nesting female turtles – and to relocate her eggs to a safe location inside a custom built hatchery. Without volunteers help, most nests would be poached by humans, eaten by wild animals or washed away in the tide – so every helping hand is appreciated!

The project itself is run by a local NGO, and receives no funding. Therefore be prepared to get back to basics! The camp has no electricity and has only cold running water – a perfect way to escape from our hectic lifestyles , on a beautiful deserted beach. Our accommodation for the week is a rustic style wooden house on the beach, with dorm rooms for the volunteers.

In order for these conservation projects to work, they need a steady flow of enthusiastic volunteers, not only to work directly with the turtles, but also to keep the logistics of the camp running. This means that there is plenty of day time work to be done as well. Although tiring, the memories of releasing dozens of baby turtles back into the ocean are unforgettable!

Generally volunteers are responsible for the following:

- Supervising the turtle hatchery in short shifts 24 hours a day
- Night patrols
- Necessary maintenance on the existing volunteer house
- Collecting scientific data of both adult and baby turtles
- Collection of food and fresh water for volunteer consumption (organized by project host)

Building Houses for underprivileged families in San Ramon.

A rewarding way to help a family in need – help build them their own home!

Our building projects work in conjunction with Fundacion Costa Rica – Canada Rural housing programme, to help families with low income become home owners. The foundation supports families from the first application for housing, helping them fulfill the necessary requirements, support during the construction process, and collecting the monthly loan payments.

The Fundación para la Vivienda Rural Costa Rica-Canadá has left its footprints in the rural areas, changing the lives of the people and promoting a substantial improvement in each of the communities and families.

Places that didn't have public services such as drinking water, electricity and telephone, now have them. Also, places with no adequate access roads, now have the possibility of improving them.

Volunteers play a huge part in the whole construction process. Taking instruction from a local foreman and local builders, we are there from start to finish, from digging the foundations, mixing cement, brick laying and leveling floors – this really is giving back to the communities as you see the results of your hard work each day!

Depending on which stage the house is at you may get involved in some of the following tasks:

- Digging foundations and drainage trenches
- Digging the septic tank
- Mixing cement (by hand!)
- Constructing earthquake supports
- Bricklaying
- Plastering
- Construction of roof trellises

What to Pack

Please note that this kit list is intended to help you plan what you may need to take with you and therefore you may not need all of the listed items on your travels.

Personal Admin

- Passport, travel insurance certificates and personal documentation
- Photocopies of all the above to be left at home with your next of kin
- Spending money
- Cash for airport departure tax
- Proof of inoculations - including yellow fever - please speak to your GP about any other necessary immunizations
- Guidebook on country – recommended Lonely Planet or Footprints

General

- Camera / Film / Batteries
- Notebooks and pens, diary etc
- Torch / Extra Batteries
- Sunglasses
- Pocket-knife (comes in handy for general use – please do not pack in your hand luggage!)
- Water bottle – at least one litre
- Day pack/rucksack for everyday use
- A sleeping bag liner (in some accommodation sheets are not included)
- Mosquito Net (if required)
- Personal enjoyment - books, cards, music etc
- Personal hygiene items (deodorant, soap, shampoo, toothbrush etc)
- Spanish dictionary, verb book etc

Clothing

- Hat
- Comfortable walking shoes
- A pair of thick socks for walking
- Sandals
- Waterproof Jacket
- Fleece/pullover (for cool evenings)
- Long trousers and long sleeved top- must be dark coloured for Sea Turtle conservation project.
- Clothes and shoes suitable for working on a building site
- Swimwear
- Towel

Medical

- Personal medication
- First Aid Kit (e.g. Antihistamines, Anti-diarrhoea tablets, headache tablets)
- Sunscreen
- Mosquito and insect repellent

Minimum Age

Minimum age 18, maximum age decided on health and fitness of potential participant.

Minimum Numbers

This trip does require a minimum number of travellers to run. Please confirm with our travel advisors that the trip has met the requirements before booking flights.

Flights

Your flight to Costa Rica should arrive at Juan Santamaria International Airport (SJO), San Jose, Costa Rica at any time on your programme start date, and your return flight should be arranged for your programme end date.

Please note: This programme requires a minimum number of participants to run. Please contact us to confirm whether the minimum numbers have been met for your start date, we recommend that you do not book your flights until we have confirmed these numbers and the programme will be running.

To book your flights, please contact your travel advisor who will do their best to get you the best deal on the day. Please provide them with your full name as it is stated in your passport. Before you make the call please make sure you have your required departure dates, return dates and other details you may require.

Please note: If you are flying to Costa Rica via the USA you will need to obtain Travel Authorisation by registering online through the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) no later than 72 hours before departure. This is compulsory and will cost USD\$14 to register. To register, please visit: www.esta.cbp.dhs.gov

It is important that once you have booked your flights you add these details to your Online account, or alternatively you can contact us with your departure date, the flight number and arrival time at your destination.

FAQs

1. **Are the start dates set?**
Yes, these dates cannot change.
2. **Do I need to speak Spanish?**
No, you will not have to speak Spanish.
3. **How much money to you advise on taking?**
We advise around £80-100 per week.

4. **Can I go with my friend?**

Yes, you would be more than welcome.

5. **Do people go on their own?**

Yes and it's a great way to meet like minded travelers.

Support & Advice

Your safety is paramount which is why all our programs have been visited and assessments have been conducted to ensure any major risks have been minimized.

You will be assigned a personal travel advisor who will co-ordinate your program with you. Feel free to contact them at any time before you go, or when you are on your travels. They will provide you with competent assistance and help with any questions or advice you may need during your stay.

In addition, you will have access to a 24 hour emergency contact number so you can contact one of our staff at any time should you need to. In addition our overseas partners and coordinators are on hand in-country to assist you.

Financial Security

We know that the last thing you want to worry about when you're planning your trip of a lifetime is whether your money is in safe hands. As a leading global gap year provider it's our job to make sure your finances are secure, so when you book with us you can be confident that we do just that.

Real Gap Experience is part of TUI Travel Plc, one of the largest travel organisations in the world, and these days in the travel industry, large means secure.

Insurance

Whether you're traveling for two weeks or two years, trekking the Amazon in Ecuador or on safari in Africa, insurance is an essential part of your adventure and will help you enjoy your travels, secure in the knowledge that you have the protection you need. In fact, everyone traveling with us must have adequate cover before their trip begins.

Of course you are free to buy insurance from any provider, however at Real Gap Experience, we have partnered with World Nomads to offer policies that have been specifically designed to meet the needs of global travel. If you think you're already covered by an existing policy, such as those offered by credit card providers, check the policy wording very carefully to ensure it covers you for your Real Gap Experience.

For more information on travel insurance please contact us to speak to one of our travel advisors.

Money Matters

The currency in Costa Rica is the Colón (CRC; symbol ₡), which is subdivided into 100 Céntimos. Coins come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 25, 50, 100 and notes come in denominations of 500, 1,000, 2,000, 5,000 and 10,000.

While Costa Rica's close proximity to North America means that US Dollars are widely accepted at most establishments in Buena Vista and some large country towns, it is advisable to have some local currency to pay for transportation or goods at smaller establishments.

Credit cards such as MasterCard and Visa are accepted in cities and most tourist areas, though use in less commercial areas may be limited. This is also true of ATM machines or 'Cajeros automáticos'. ATMs commonly dispense both US Dollars and Nuevos Soles and usually charge for using international cards.

Meal, Inexpensive Restaurant \$8.46
Domestic Beer (0.5 litre draught) \$1.66
Coke/Pepsi (0.33 litre bottle) \$1.29
Water (0.33 litre bottle) \$0.96

(Prices quoted in US Dollar)

Passports and Visas

All nationalities require a full passport that must be valid for 6 months beyond the intended length of stay. It is your responsibility to have the correct personal documents and to obtain your own visa, if one is necessary, in accordance with the regulations of the country you are to visit. The information offered below is to help you with that process. We are not responsible for the actions of local immigration and customs officials, whether at points of entry or otherwise, and any subsequent effects.

Citizens of the European Union, the USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia will be issued a Tourist Visa on entry for stays of up to 90 days. For longer stays or other nationalities, please consult your nearest Costa Rican Embassy or High Commission.

Cultural Considerations

Costa Rica is caught between old cultural forces and new ones. Family ties are strong, and the major traditions within family are often strongly religious, such as: baptisms, first communions, engagement parties, weddings and funerals. Gender roles tend to be fairly traditional, though in urban areas women's opportunities are improving all the time. The Costa Ricans are friendly people and it is customary to greet and part with handshakes.

Religion

Roman Catholicism is the official religion and about 90% of the population is Roman Catholic. Religion is an important part of life in Costa Rica, and we would urge you to be respectful at all times in and around places of worship. Do not be surprised to see individuals crossing themselves when passing any object of religious significance or reciting religious adages at appropriate times.

Clothing

Casual dress is fine but you should avoid beachwear away from the coast and dress conservatively, especially in rural areas, which tend to be fairly traditional and religious. When entering a religious area, please make sure you are appropriately covered.

Tipping

A 10% service charge and 13% tax is automatically added to restaurant bills. Taxi drivers are usually not tipped.

Vaccinations & Health

Travel health can often be something people forget about before going away, but a little preparation and knowledge can go a long way to help you stay fit and healthy while abroad. The risks to your health whilst travelling will vary depending on your general health and the type of activities you are going to be partaking in and the length of your stay.

Since we are not medically qualified, it is recommended that you consult with your Doctor or a recognised Travel Medical Advisory Service who will assess your particular health risks before recommending vaccines and/or anti-malarial tablets and advising you on what precautions you should take.

Safety

Unfortunately, tourists are often targets for pickpockets and thieves. Please educate yourself about South America and Costa Rica in particular, before you leave, so that you can be alert to all types of situations. Safety guidelines will be covered in detail at your orientation session upon arrival but please familiarise yourself with the following general travel safety rules.

- Avoid travelling alone, especially at night.
- Find out where the unsafe areas are and avoid them.
- When travelling keep all-important documents and valuables in a safe place, like an inner hidden pocket or money belt.
- Carry only as much cash as you think you will need for the day.
- Don't wear expensive jewellery or watches.
- Be wary of people who seem too friendly too fast.
- Keep cameras out of sight. Always keep bags and purses in your sight, especially on public transport.
- Before swimming, ask how safe the area is.

In Costa Rica you should avoid sleeping on beaches or camping outside of official sites, as unprotected areas can be dangerous at night. Riptides (or ripcurrents) are a problem in the seas of Costa Rica, and can be very dangerous. Always follow beach guidelines and do not swim or surf against the advice of the coastguard.

We advise that you check your government's advice before travelling abroad. For UK, American and Australian customers please see the relevant links below;

UK: www.fco.gov.uk

USA: www.travel.state.gov

Australia: www.smartraveller.gov.au

ATM Theft

It is very likely that you will need to withdraw cash at some point during your travels. Please be cautious when withdrawing money from an ATM and ensure that you are vigilant of other people near the ATM, especially those that offer unsolicited assistance if your card is detained. It has been recognised that individuals are operating unlawful withdrawals by placing 'traps' in ATMs whereby personal bank cards are being detained, causing the victim to believe their card transaction has not been completed, and leaving their bank card in the ATM which is then later retrieved by the thief.

Language Guide

The main spoken language in Costa Rica is Spanish. Here are a few basic phrases that should help you get by during your trip. We also suggest you obtain a Lonely Planet or language guide for the destination(s) you are travelling to.

Hello - *Hola!*

Good day - *Buenas dias!*

How are you? - *Como estas?* ('*Como estas usted?*' if you need to be extra formal!)

Goodbye - *Adios*

Please - *Por favour*

Thank you - *Gracias*

I don't understand - *No entiendo*

I don't speak Spanish - *No hablo espanol*

Sorry/excuse me - *Lo siento*

Where is...? - *Donde esta...?*

The bill please - *La cuenta por favour*

Food & Drink

The standards of health and hygiene are among the best in Latin America - milk, ice cream and other dairy products are safe. Avoid uncooked meats. If you are at all unsure about something, remember it is always better to be safe than sorry. Typical dishes of Costa Rica include:

- Gallos - Filled tortillas
- Casado - Rice, beans, beef or fish, fried plantain, chopped cabbage
- Arreglados - Puff pastries filled with beef, chicken, vegetables or cheese
- Sopa Negra - Soup with black beans and an egg in it
- Gallo Pinto - Rice & beans with sour cream or fried eggs

Drinks

You can drink tap water in most major towns, though be advised that it is heavily chlorinated. In other locations bottled water is readily available.

There are many types of cold fruit drinks, (made with milk or water). They are very popular and most of them are delicious. Coffee is usually good. The local beers are Bavaria, Pilsen, Imperial and Tropical.

Smoking / Alcohol / Drugs

Smoking and drinking is acceptable in Costa Rica, and readily available. However, please respect other volunteers. Smoking is not permissible in volunteer apartments or the host families' homes. Many regions in Costa Rica have banned or limited smoking in public places and many restaurants will have a separate seating area for those wishing to smoke.

It is absolutely forbidden to bring drugs into Costa Rica. Always keep an eye on your luggage while travelling. Never bring anyone else's luggage through customs. If you get caught there is little chance that you will walk away without punishment. As in most countries, Costa Rica has very strict rules when it comes to the possession of

drugs. All drugs, including “soft” drugs like marijuana, are ILLEGAL. Please do NOT use any illegal substances whilst travelling – it is not worth the risk and is not acceptable at the project.

Public Holidays

To view a list of the public holidays for Vietnam, please see the link below:

www.timeanddate.com/holidays/costa-rica/

When planning your trip, you should be aware of the major national holidays celebrated throughout the country. Many schools, government offices, stores and banks are closed on National Holidays. Please note that there may be slight date variations for some of the holidays each year and that the list is not exhaustive.

Weather

Temperatures in Costa Rica are high throughout the year with the warmest weather on the lowlands and the Caribbean and Pacific coasts. San Jose and other mountainous areas are cooler and vary between 16-26°. The hottest months of the year are between March and April with the rainy season falling between March and November; the coast is humid and rainy for most of the year.

Time

Costa Rica is six hours behind GMT.

Electricity

In Costa Rica the electric system is 120 Volts and frequency 60 Hertz. If your device does not accept electricity at this voltage you will need an adapter.

Outlets in Costa Rica generally accept 1 type of plug:



Flat blade plug

Trip Note Disclaimer

The information contained in this trip note has been compiled with great care and is provided in good faith. Any itinerary featured is correct at time of release. However, our itineraries may change as we make improvements that result from travellers' comments, our own research or from time to time as a result of recommended travel advice.

You can rest assured that it is always our goal to provide you with the most rewarding trip and experience ever!

Our Details



Costa Rica Experience - Sept to Nov

If you have any questions about this trip please do not hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to answer them.

Phone: 1-800-985-4852

Email: info@realgap.com

Post: Real Gap Experience, 8 Essex Center Drive, Peabody, MA 01960

Web: www.realgap.com